

REMARKS

Claims 35-51 currently appear in this application. The Office Action of July 27, 2001, has been carefully studied. It is believed that all of the claims are allowable, and favorable action is earnestly requested.

New claims 35-51 have been submitted covering the
embodiments shown in Figures 3A and 3B.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 31-34, 14-17, 19-21, 23-26, 28 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the art that the inventor, at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

This rejection is respectfully traversed. The present amendment cancels claims 31-34, 14-17, 19-21, 23-26, 28 and 29 in favor of claims 35-51. Support for claims 35-51 can be found in the specification as filed in Figures 3A and 3B.

Art Rejections

Claims 31-34, 14-17, 19-21, 23-26, 28 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oellerking in view of Christensen et al.

This rejection is respectfully traversed. Oellerking discloses a repair patch made of fabric coated with

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weldable plastic material comprising a sealing strip of weldable plastic material for sealing the circumference of the material of the patch to a sheet by welding. There is nothing in Oellerking that discloses or suggests a fixing portion on the welding fabric. Christensen teaches that providing auxiliary fixing means such as stitching in the portion of a welding fabric outside the welded portion enhances the overall strength of the bond. However, in Christensen, the only fixing portion is stitching, and the auxiliary fixing means is **outside** the welded portion. In the present invention, the auxiliary fixing means is provided on the fixing portion and the auxiliary fixing means comprises holes bored into the fixing unit or straps. There is neither disclosure nor suggestion in either Oellerking or Christensen of these types of fixing means located on the composite material.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the claims are now in condition for allowance, and favorable action thereon is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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